

The University of Chicago

THE END OF BRITISH ISOLATION:
THE ORIGINS OF THE ANGLO-
JAPANESE ALLIANCE

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE
SOCIAL SCIENCES IN CANDIDACY FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

1935

By

FRANK GOODMAN WILLISTON

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The dubious victory of Great Britain and her allies in the Crimean War was followed by almost half a century of abstention from direct participation in continental affairs. The diplomatic revolutions involved in the unification of Germany and Italy and the nascent nationalism in the Balkans all failed to force Great Britain to reassume her role as a continental Power. In 1902 she suddenly announced her alliance with Japan and two years later her agreement with France launched her again into the stream of European diplomacy. What new factors appeared or which ones, long operative, became powerful enough to effect such a change? The answer is to be found in a wide range of contemporary materials. The British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914, Parliamentary Debates, and the Parliamentary Papers reveal the major lines of British foreign policy when supplemented by the Documents diplomatiques francais relatifs aux origines de la guerre de 1914, and Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette, 1871-1914. The archives of the State Department of the United States have been consulted, but have yielded little. Tyler Dennett's John Hay, Americans in Eastern Asia, and Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War, together with the official Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, and Letters of John Hay and Extracts from Diary (printed but not published), and Dennis, Adventures in American Diplomacy, have afforded a fairly clear picture of the role taken by America. In the absence of the Japanese documents the following biographical studies available have served to check the British story of the formation of the treaty: Hayashi, Secret Memoirs of Count Tadasu Hayashi; Ishii, Gaiko Yoroku; Ito, Kato Komei; Mutsu, Hakushaku Mutsu Minemitsu iko.

In some respects more valuable than these official and semi-official accounts, the large number of biographical works together with contemporary periodicals and newspapers furnish an excellent picture of the shifts of public opinion in Great Britain as well as more intimate details of the diplomacy of the period. Some of the more important of these are: Beresford, The Memoirs of Admiral Lord Charles Beresford; Bülow, Memoirs of Prince von Bülow; Chirol, Fifty Years in a Changing World; Eckardstein, Die Entlassung des Fürsten Bülows, and his Lebenserinnerungen und politische

Denkwürdigkeiten; Gerard, Ma Mission en Chine; Hicks Beach, Life of Sir Michael Hicks Beach; Lee, King Edward VII; Meyendorff, Correspondence Diplomatique du Baron de Staal; Newton, Lord Lansdowne; Ronaldshay, The Life of Lord Curzon; Waldersee, Denkwürdigkeiten des General-Feldmarschalls Alfred Grafen von Waldersee. Newspapers consulted were the Clarion; Daily News (London); Hongkong Telegraph; Japan Daily Herald; Japan Weekly Mail; Labour Leader; Liverpool Journal of Commerce; Manchester Guardian; North China Herald; New York Times; Standard; and the Times. General periodical literature was even more plentiful, but the following were of special value: Contemporary Review; Economist; Fortnightly Review; National Review; Nineteenth Century; Revue des deux Mondes; Spectator; and Westminster Review.

The turn of the century brought the threat of the partition of China and a series of diplomatic shifts on the continent which might well have alarmed the staunchest Briton. Unfortunately these new problems had to be solved against a background of economic competition which was to lose to Great Britain her century old commercial and industrial supremacy. The full threat implicit in this unhappy juncture of menaces was not felt until her long-smouldering difficulties with the Boer republics flamed into open war in the fall of 1899 and she found herself the "best hated country in the world." A few of the more belligerent spirits fought back, concentrating on France from whence came the most virulent attacks, but the general sentiment of Europe was so distinctly hostile that singling out individual nations afforded little relief.

The disasters which met British arms in the early months of the war not only sobered the early enthusiasm, but brought the widespread conviction that the very existence of the Empire was at stake. The parliamentary debates of 1900 are filled with lugubrious utterances from government benches as well as the opposition, all testifying to the widespread conviction as to the gravity of the crisis. Against the background of mounting armaments in Europe the British shortcomings on the battlefield seemed suicidal. The introduction of the German naval bill of 1900 was not only to mark a turning point in the relations of the two countries, but to precipitate a veritable naval craze.¹ The members of the British government publicly acknowledged this growing fear while moving for armament increases. They so obviously shared the feeling that Dilke, probably the foremost authority on the British

¹New York Times, February 9, 12, 1900.

navy in parliament, declared that the government had placed the danger to the country higher than it had ever been put by an opposition.

Everywhere British interests appeared to be on the defensive. It was in the Far East, however, that events threatened complete disaster. At the time when England was deluged with demands for the restoration of British military strength and prestige she was being involved in ever greater commitments of men and money in a dispute within her own empire. Even the friendlier sections of the continental press accompanied their protestations of friendliness with grave warnings of British danger, but to most Europeans the situation was simply "un concourse heurx de circonstances."¹ Throughout the year 1901 rumors of new alignments in which mutual hostility toward England was the motivating force, seemed nearer to actuality. A rapprochement between Germany and her two neighbors could no longer be regarded as impossible. Even the historic Anglo-Italian friendliness was endangered by British neglect and French overtures thereby increasing the probability of renewed Russian intrigue in the Mediterranean. England's isolation in a sea of European hatred now seemed more marked than ever, and the country was warned by the government that they could no longer build on "such a quicksand as the goodwill and forbearance of foreign Powers."² Britain could not hope to keep out of entanglements and if that meant war they must be ready for it. Under such circumstances a re-evaluation of the policy of splendid isolation was inevitable. Few cabinets in British history had been confronted with the problem of adjusting policies amidst such a disappearance of old landmarks. From Constantinople to Peking, from Alexandria to Capetown old guide posts were down, former paths blocked. It was small wonder that British public opinion should have grown fearful, querulous, and even critical of its leadership.

In the fields of industry and trade Great Britain found herself increasingly on the defensive. The year 1898 was the first in modern times when British exports, visible and invisible, failed to match the total imports. It was also the first year in which British exports were surpassed by a rival--this time by the United States. Chambers of Commerce sent out commissions to examine into the state of British trade in the Far East and their gloomy reports were duly submitted to the government and to an alarmed British public. Later developments disproved many of

¹ Revue des deux Mondes, CLX (1900), 699.

² Hansard, XC (March 6, 1901), 1062 ff.

these fears, but the first impact of this rivalry gave rise to a widespread conviction of approaching disaster. So insistent were the demands from British merchants for protection that the Duke of Devonshire complained to Eckardstein, German charge d'affaires at London, that "he could never escape the petitions daily showered on him by the Lancashire cotton industry. . . ."¹

Various suggestions were made and remedies proposed, but common agreement extended only to the acknowledgment that drastic steps alone could save Britain from a prolonged slump from which she might never rise. At home and abroad Englishmen were demanding a more vigorous foreign policy to match the restless energy and superb natural resources of the Yankee and the methodical persistency and deadly efficiency of the German. Such organizations as the China Association and the local, national, and imperial chambers of commerce exerted constant pressure upon Salisbury's government to protect British interests by a more effective foreign policy. The government's assurances that British commercial hegemony was unimpaired were met with direct reports of the losing battles which those commercial interests were fighting in the East. These jeremiads were not confined to business men or irresponsible jingoists who saw an affront or menace in every shift in world affairs. Leaders of government and opposition alike agreed that they were "fighting not so much for our old supremacy as for our very existence as a commercial nation."² So omnipresent was this stream of protests, resolutions, and articles that the Economist complained that it had become a national bugbear and Andrew Carnegie found the morale of his friends in British industry lower in 1901 than he had ever known it.

The sharpening economic struggle with its accompanying naval threat from Germany was not in itself sufficient to account for Britain's surrender of splendid isolation. One could accept the thesis that the growth of German trade was the cause of the subsequent anti-German orientation of British world policy³ and yet be forced to acknowledge that it played but a minor part among the motivating forces back of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. To the year 1902 Germanophobia was but the prized possession of vehement mincrities while the policy of Downing Street was primarily concerned with staving off the seemingly irresistible push of the

¹H. Eckardstein, Ten Years at the Court of St. James (London, 1921), p. 93. Cf. North China Herald, December 5, 1900.

²4 Hansard, XCVII (July 19, 1901), 1008, 1018.

³R. J. S. Hoffman, Great Britain and the German Trade Rivalry (Philadelphia, 1933), p. 303.

Russian glacier. Within less than two years after Russia had evicted the victorious Japan from the Liaotung peninsula she had successfully entrenched herself not only there but throughout Manchuria and Korea and had launched into a program of reckless imperialism.

As though to add to British fears of Russia, Germany had apparently placed herself on the side of Russia and France in the Far East, thus shifting the point of the Franco-Russian alliance from Germany to England. Actually Germany thought she would be able to play an independent hand, exacting compensations for her neutrality from each side. In spite of open and repeated hints, Germany had secured nothing and had accordingly seized and occupied Kiaochow in the winter of 1897. The Russian occupation of Port Arthur followed close upon the German move and was accompanied by alarming rumors of a secret Sino-Russian alliance which St. Petersburg would neither acknowledge nor disavow. All of the previous foreign and domestic disturbances into which the Manchus had blundered had left the territorial integrity of China proper virtually intact. Now, with other Powers threatening to duplicate the actions of Russia and Germany, the maintenance of the Open Door threatened to be too heavy a burden for British shoulders. Germany in Shantung might prove embarrassing and inconvenient, but without naval support her every move was at the mercy of the British fleet, whereas Russia, with her land approach, could push to the very heart of the Yangtze Valley.

In spite of the general charges of negligence, the British government did not wait for this threat to materialize. A proposal for a general agreement with Russia was made which would cover all points in dispute between the two Powers. A partition of preponderance was offered which would have divided Turkey and China into spheres of influence without regard to other claimants. Russia balked at so sweeping a program and insisted that the Chinese situation must be handled first, indicating rather clearly that her demands in that area would be excessively high. The negotiations were destined to end there. The formal occupation of the Liaotung peninsula by Russia at the beginning of the conversations had robbed England of the one weapon with which she might have forced an agreement. Her own compensatory seizure of Weihaiwei shortly thereafter further weakened the British position for bargaining. Consular reports soon made it clear that Russia was flouting British treaty rights and was merely using the negotiations as a screen for her activities in Manchuria. As Anglo-French relations became increasingly strained over the Fashoda affair the Russian attitude became openly hostile. So menacing was this new shift that Salisbury met the attack by a pledge of full support to China

should she suffer at the hands of a third Power for granting any concession to Great Britain or her citizens.

The same sense of desperate urgency which had prompted the abortive Anglo-Russian negotiations led to a mutual acknowledgment of the advisability of an Anglo-German agreement. The German foreign office had been alarmed by the threatening attitude of Russia over the contemplated German move in China as well as by the news of the extended renewal of the Franco-Russian alliance. Berlin therefore felt that an Anglo-German rapprochement might force Russia into a friendlier role and could also be used to underwrite the German venture in Shantung. Furthermore, there was the hope of liquidating colonial disputes between the two Powers and securing some concessions which might satisfy the more insistent demands of the German imperialists.

Although members of the German government were not in accord as to the advisability of such an agreement, vague conversations were carried on between the two capitals through November and December of 1897 without appreciable success. With the German move into Shantung the negotiations definitely took shape in the form of a possible alliance. Chamberlain and the Duke of Devonshire gave their support, insisting that Great Britain was ready to end her isolation and willing to join the Triple Alliance. Failing that, they said she would be forced to make her peace with France and Russia. Bülow, the German chancellor, insisted that the British position would grow steadily worse, thus enabling Germany to increase the price to be demanded. Until that moment had arrived the German policy must be one of maintaining a delicate balance between England and Russia by playing one off against the other. Negotiations had thus reached an apparent impasse when Chamberlain publicly declared on May 13 for a British alliance with Germany and the United States as the only safeguard against Russia in the Far East.¹ Instead of facilitating the conversations, Berlin resented the bluntness of Chamberlain's public wooing. The Kaiser, disgusted with the stalemate reached, now wrote to the Czar telling him of British offers of an alliance. Before committing Germany, however, he was anxious to know what Russia could offer as a counter proposal. The response was startling.

¹The proposal for an agreement with the United States had been preceded by at least three formal requests from London for American support of British policy (T. Dennett, John Hay [New York, 1933], pp. 219 f., 285, 288). The writer has found nothing in the British Documents or in the archives of the State Department in Washington concerning these or subsequent "feelers."

The Czar assured him that the British government had made many similarly tempting offers to Russia, but, convinced of the seriousness of the British position, he had refused to consider them. This robbed the Kaiser of all hope of applying pressure on Russia and confirmed him in his determination to continue playing England off against Russia with every point yielded by the one to be used as an added bit of leverage on the other.

Independent of his government's conversations with Berlin and St. Petersburg, but with its complete approval, MacDonald matched the German action in Shantung by securing through threats the port of Weihaiwei and a pledge for the non-alienation of the Yangtze region together with some additional concessions. Japan's ready surrender of the port, which she was holding as a pledge for the payment of the Chinese indemnity, was gratefully acknowledged by the British government and public. The British minister continued to devote himself to a feverish support of every British concessionaire. Many of the projects to which he gave official sanction never materialized beyond the lease, but his successful activity failed to silence the critics of the government who continued to demand greater security for British investments in China. Even the public declaration by a member of the cabinet of the readiness of the government to embark upon a war, if necessary to save the Open Door, received scant favorable comment. A shadowy victory was won from Russia by the signature of a railway agreement, April, 1899, by which a delimitation of railway spheres was acknowledged. A few in England received the announcement with enthusiasm, but the bulk of British opinion accepted it as a last resort. Events of the next two years were to reveal Russian ambitions more clearly and a growing majority of Englishmen came to regard the convention as simply another step in the British retreat before Russia. At best it was but a sorry achievement to place against the general record of defeat.

The revival of the Samoan question in the summer of 1898 gave Britain the opportunity to show her good faith in regard to the colonial questions. Unfortunately, the negotiations were accompanied by so many recriminations that at one time Bülow was prepared to sever diplomatic relations. The negotiations were further enlivened by an undignified spat between Victoria and William II over Salisbury's alleged Germanophobia. In spite of these obstacles an agreement over Samoa was reached in November, but the tactics used by both parties left mutual suspicion and resentment. A visit to England by the Kaiser and his chancellor gave the negotiations a fresh start. British statesmen promised to win Salisbury over to the idea of an alliance and to do what they could to persuade the Times to take a less hostile note.

Encouraged by the excellent tone displayed in these conversations, Chamberlain repeated his public appeal for an alliance. Although the speech was a fair summary of conclusions just reached by the conferences it was met by a storm of Anglophobia in Germany before which Bülow was forced to bow. He publicly disavowed the necessity for such an alliance and declared that Germany must trust to her expanding naval program for security. Whatever hopes the proponents of the treaty had been able to salvage were now practically destroyed. British seizure of German ships on the charge of carrying contraband to the Boers increased the resentment against Bülow and the projected agreement. Skeptical from the start, Salisbury now openly shared the chancellor's antipathy and Chamberlain and his group seemed to be pushing a lost cause.

All the efforts of British statesmen to gain adequate security for their legitimate interests through mutually self-denying agreements and open alliances had thus ended in failure. To the British public that failure could be explained only by the seeming indifference of the government. The issuance of a new Blue Book of China¹ confirmed their fears and furnished ammunition for a continued attack upon the ineptitude of the government. In England and in the Far East the charge was repeatedly made that British prestige and influence in China had completely disappeared. Even the British acceptance of the Hay Note on the Open Door was interpreted as a surrender of British leadership to the United States. Russian expansion in Manchuria was being so obviously pushed without regard to the railway agreement with Great Britain or the principles of the Open Door that, as the year 1900 opened, the possibility of an Anglo-Russian war was a general subject for diplomatic speculation.

Against this background of strained diplomacy came the news of the Boxer outbreak in the early summer of 1900. This new crisis found Great Britain unable to move her army from South Africa and Russia with large forces already stationed in the Far East ready for action in China. The first concern of Downing Street, however, was the rescue of the beleaguered legations in Peking. Without waiting for the sanction of the other interested Powers, Salisbury asked Japan to undertake the task, agreeing to supply the necessary funds. Russia and Germany objected and Japan wisely refused to act. The idea of a Japanese mandate to save the Europeans had caught the imagination of the British public and the resultant discussion did much to make the two peoples conscious of an identity of interests.

¹Parliamentary Papers, China No. 1 (1899).

Not content with blocking the use of Japanese troops, Russia proceeded to capitalize the anarchical condition in northern China to extend her control over Manchuria. Her procedure was so patent that it seemed as though she were deliberately reminding the British of their admitted helplessness. A British owned railway in northern China was seized by Russia and the entire rolling stock at once transferred to Manchuria. This move was followed by others, some petty in themselves, but all designed to demonstrate the futility of British opposition to the Russian program. The dramatic rescue of the legations gave Russia the further opportunity of announcing her withdrawal from the concert of Powers and from Peking. British statesmen were convinced that she was simply transferring her activities from the scrutiny of the Powers to the less conspicuous but more profitable consolidation and extension of her gains in Manchuria. Such a move would also give Russia the opportunity of posing as the friend of China while the other States would be placed in the role of her executioners.

As though to counterbalance this defection of Russia, Germany, prompted by the murder of her minister von Ketteler and the Kaiser's fear of the Yellow Peril, assumed the leadership in organizing a punitive expedition. Russia and France were so obviously cool toward this new move that the German government was compelled to turn to England for diplomatic support. Count Waldersee, chosen by the Kaiser to head this expedition, was a confirmed Anglophobe and an equally convinced believer in the inevitability of an Anglo-Russian clash. His memoirs show the resultant pro-Russian character of his actions, yet his account is filled with repeated instances of Russian duplicity and hostility to the German program.

The negotiations in Peking which followed the relief of the legations demonstrated the unwillingness of the Powers to trust each other. Furthermore, the protracted discussions endangering, as they did, British commercial interests in China, naturally encouraged attacks upon British policy. The Times led the way with columns of warnings from Peking against Russia and Germany. Everyone seemed to have a British policy for the Far Eastern crisis except the government, but again there was general agreement only in the conviction that unless drastic changes took place British interests would disappear.

British policy had not been as supine as was generally alleged. Reluctant to resume the fruitless Anglo-German conversations, Salisbury had first turned to the United States for a joint agreement to preserve the Open Door. Hay regretfully declined and the British prime minister was forced to reconsider German terms. Sensing something of the British predicament, Berlin determined

that any agreement entered into must prevent British monopoly of the Yangtze and guarantee a corresponding protection of German interests there as elsewhere in China. The subsequent negotiations were again characterized by mutual suspicion and distrust and it was only their fear of Russia which brought a finished treaty. Even this would have been inadequate to force Germany into a definite commitment were it not for the fear that British defection would leave Germany embarrassingly alone in China.

Out of such fragile materials an Anglo-German convention was signed October 15, 1900. The treaty was no attempt to play the Samaritan to a victimized China, but a frank desire to maintain existing treaty rights. The Contracting Parties agreed to uphold the principle of the Open Door for China's ports and littoral "as far as they can exercise influence." Such a qualifying phrase rendered the agreement innocuous should either member be reluctant to push the defense of the Open Door to the point of open conflict. The remaining articles carried a promise to attempt to maintain the territorial status quo in China yet provided that in case of violation by other Powers, the contracting Parties would come to an understanding as to the steps to be taken. Other Powers were to be invited to participate.

The treaty was received with general indifference by its framers as well as the general public of each country. Russia recognized that it was aimed against herself, but professed an indifference which her statesmen did not feel. Japan alone of the Powers gave it an enthusiastic acceptance. The treaty might have survived had there been time for public opinion in the two countries to grow familiar with the new developments. With an increased consciousness of the basic identity of interests, the agreement might have grown into a full fledged treaty of alliance. Unfortunately the new treaty was too soon put to a test which exposed its weakness. The announcement of the Russian seizure of Newchwang, the port of Manchuria, was followed by rumors of a secret Sino-Russian convention which would have given Manchuria to Russia. In spite of denials by both countries, the evidence supporting the rumors seemed incontrovertible. Russia made matters worse by seizing a valuable tract of land in Tientsin, an example promptly followed by France, Belgium and Japan. Lansdowne, now in control of the foreign office, was anxious to use the incident as a test case for the new agreement. Bülow denied the applicability of the treaty, but increased Russian pressure on Peking for the ratification of the pending Manchurian convention brought such a vigorous protest from the British press that Lansdowne was forced to take some positive step. The continued refusal of Lamsdorff to divulge the nature of the agreement finally brought

Germany into line and the two Powers made a joint protest to China against her making any separate arrangements with any Power until her obligations arising out of the Boxer difficulties were determined. China could only acknowledge her helplessness against the Russian demands, a confession of weakness which still further alarmed Lansdowne. Japan was equally disturbed and as early as March, 1901, asked England what she would do in case of a Russo-Japanese clash. Japanese public opinion was in a serious state and talk of war was prevalent. Bertie, a secretary in the foreign office, argued in a confidential memorandum for his government that should Japan fall before Russia, the British position in the Far East was doomed. No effort was made, however, to assure Japan of British aid.

While the government was fumbling its way out of an apparent impasse, a group in the British cabinet, dissatisfied with the inadequacy of the Anglo-German agreement and increasingly alarmed over events in the Far East, turned once more to Germany in January, 1901. The negotiations went through the same dreary round. Bülow was even more convinced that Britain was in a precarious position, and that state of affairs, he argued, was certain to increase and thus boost the price which Germany could demand. "Time runs for us,"¹ insisted Holstein in confirmation of his chief's contention. On the other hand, the Kaiser's appearance at the bedside of his dying grandmother, Victoria, gave a new impetus to the alliance. His act had made him more popular in England than ever before or since, but the drift of public opinion in both countries was definitely apart. Bülow and Holstein felt their way cautiously, convinced that England was trying to embroil Germany with Russia.

At this juncture the question of invoking the Anglo-German agreement of 1900 came to a head. In spite of prodding from London, Bülow was unwilling to do more than join in a protest to Russia and somewhat irritably declared in the Reichstag that the agreement did not include Manchuria. Lansdowne rather lamely insisted that this stand was a misinterpretation of the treaty terms, but the British Documents show that Bülow was technically correct. Japan publicly accepted the British interpretation, but Germany refused to alter her position. The net result of the one formal agreement reached between the two Powers had been simply to provoke a fresh series of charges of bad faith and a renewed conviction that any real agreement between them was impossible. Negotiations for the defensive alliance were continued in spite of this breach.

¹Holstein to Metternich, 21 January 1901, G.P., XVII, 22 f.

Eckardstein was convinced that he could get no support from Berlin, so made an indirect approach through Hayashi, his Japanese colleague in London. He bluntly suggested an Anglo-Japanese-German alliance on the admitted grounds that the more the Japanese minister held up the possibility of a Russo-Japanese rapprochement, the more interested would England be in an alliance with Germany. The ruse worked. A few days later, on March 22, Lansdowne reopened the negotiations asking Eckardstein if Germany would be willing to join in a defensive alliance which was to include Japan. Tentative terms were drawn up providing for a defensive alliance with the application of the casus foederis should either State be attacked by two or more Powers. Holstein insisted that Austria must be brought into the negotiations at once. This Lansdowne flatly refused to consider. Metternich, who had replaced Hatzfeldt at London, continued to work for the alliance although he insisted upon the two fatal requirements of publicity for the covenant and British adherence to the Triple Alliance.

Desultory efforts were made to keep the negotiations alive, but it was left to Chamberlain to administer the coup de grace. Goaded by the slurs appearing in the continental press on the conduct of British troops in the Boer War, he declared in a speech in Edinburgh, October 25, that the European soldier--and the German army was specifically mentioned--had set an example of brutality which England had never approached. The speech aroused such bitterness in Germany that Bülow answered it in kind in the Reichstag. This incident, although marking the end of the negotiations, was merely symptomatic of the rising tide of mutual suspicion and even hatred which had begun to rise on both sides of the North Sea until it overwhelmed the hopes and efforts of sympathetic statesmen. The consciousness of its growing strength paralyzed the efforts of even the most ardent supporters of friendly relations. Another factor, perhaps more potent than the first, lay in the fact that few if any of the statesmen in either country were determined to secure an agreement regardless of cost. An Anglo-French rapprochement proved possible although French public opinion was equally bitter and even more irritating in its expression because statesmen in France and Great Britain were determined that it should come. A word, too, must be said of the successful activities of the National Review and the Times. By 1901 both journals had devoted their editorial columns and articles to an attempt to prevent a real Anglo-German agreement and to force upon British public opinion the conviction of the basic hostility of the two States. The articles in the National Review were widely quoted in England and Germany and the prestige of the Times gave its utterances great weight. Repeatedly Salisbury's government found the Times a better

and quicker gatherer and dispenser of news than its own diplomatic dispatches. Public admission of that fact added weight to that journal's findings.

The collapse of the negotiations with Germany gave new encouragement to those who still clamored for an Anglo-Russian rapprochement. The bulk of British opinion, however, retained the old fear of Russia. It was moreover clear by the middle of the summer to any but the most fatuous believer in Russian assurances of good will that Manchuria was lost to China and to British trade. The year 1901 thus came to an end with Russia entrenched in Manchuria, menacing Korea and Peking alike. All expedients tried by the British government had uniformly failed. Point by point England had retreated and had gained nothing from her concessions. Never had the unfortunate results of her isolation been so painfully evident. Unless some barrier were interposed Chinese territorial and political sovereignty would be swept away by the Russian flood and with it would go all British interests in the Far East. Germany and the United States had refused to aid in the saving of China at the risk of a clash with Russia, while France had supported every move her ally had made and Italy was too weak to be of any assistance. To Japan alone the Russian threat was vital and from Japan alone could England hope for help. The growing consciousness of this fact together with a grateful recognition of the loyal part Japan had played in the days of the Boxers, combined with a new respect for Japanese military efficiency, were to sweep away any prejudices against an alliance with an Asiatic Power.

The desirability of this alliance had been proposed as early as 1875 and in the following quarter of a century had been often renewed. The enforced return of the Liaotung peninsula in 1895 prompted Japan to approach England for help which that Power felt she could not give. From this time on, however, a number of influential Japanese began to agitate for the alliance until it became a minor political issue. The threat of the partition of China forced the question of the alliance into the sphere of practical diplomacy. So frequently was it discussed in the British and continental press that the British minister to Russia found it a useful threat to hold over the Russian government during the negotiations of 1898. That same year Chamberlain proposed an alliance with Kato, then minister to London. Tokio rejected the offer on the grounds that such a move would jeopardize the already strained relations with Russia.

Although an alliance failed to materialize there were many subsequent opportunities for Japan to show her friendliness. She alone, of all the nations, evinced any enthusiasm for the British

side in the Boer War. During the Boxer trouble the Japanese government had shown an almost suspicious readiness to follow the British lead. Those in England who sought an Anglo-Russian rapprochement naturally disapproved of the proposed alliance with Japan, but British public opinion was being steadily converted to the belief that no pledge which might be wheedled from Russia would have any appreciable effect upon her policy.

The responsibility for making the initial step in the alliance negotiations is in dispute. The weight of the evidence, however, confirms Katsura's statement before the House of Peers that Japan opened the negotiations in the early spring of 1901. Certainly the British imperial position was propitious for such a move. Eckardstein's proposal to Hayashi for a triple alliance of Germany, Japan, and Great Britain puzzled Tokio. Fearful lest Germany was simply attempting to embroil Russia in the Far East, the Japanese government decided to negotiate with England alone. She was confirmed in this decision by the assurance from Lascelles, British minister to Berlin, that whereas Germany might sympathize with England and Japan in a war with Russia, she would take no other part than that of a passive spectator. It was accordingly not until April 17 that Hayashi presented the first definite offer of an alliance.

Lansdowne met the suggestion with a request for a tentative draft, but a cabinet change in Tokio delayed action. Eckardstein, who had hinted to his government the part he hoped to play in these negotiations, was promptly rebuffed by Holstein. From this time on he continued to render real assistance, but it was cautiously given and fell short of the real purpose he had intended. At the conclusion of the treaty, however, he had the thanks of Edward for his part in its inception. During the delay occasioned by the cabinet shift, Hayashi learned that the new British minister to Japan, MacDonald, who was being shifted from Peking, was a determined adherent of an Anglo-Japanese alliance. That diplomat also assured him that Edward was of the same mind and that the entire British government was fearful of a possible swing of Japan to Russia. This indiscreet revelation was to prove extremely valuable to the eager Hayashi. In spite of this useful bit of information it was not until October 8 that sufficient accord had been reached in Tokio to grant Hayashi full authority to conduct negotiations.

In spite of this power Hayashi persisted in regarding his discussions with Lansdowne as lacking official sanction. His first suggestion implied a defensive alliance requiring military support should either member be forced to fight against more than one Power in defense of its interests in the Far East. He also stated that any agreement must carefully recognize the peculiar interests which

Japan had in Korea. Negotiations continued in a leisurely fashion throughout October, but Japanese insistence upon the recognition of its special position in Korea proved an obstacle which threatened to be insurmountable. Lansdowne proposed the extension of the agreement to include India should Britain grant Hayashi's contention as to Korea, but the suggestion was promptly rejected.

Negotiations were interrupted at this juncture by the appearance of Prince Ito in Europe. His government had given way to Katsura in May and he had begun a tour of the United States and Europe. Katsura had apparently taken advantage of his known preference for an agreement with Russia to use him in St. Petersburg as an aid to the negotiations in London. Should the British conversations prove successful, Ito's visit to Russia, regardless of the status of his conversations with that Power, could be disavowed as the act of a private individual. If Hayashi failed, any desirable arrangement entered into by Ito could be given governmental approval. A suspicion of the true state of affairs might well serve as a stimulus to the statesmen of both countries to grant the maximum concessions to Japan rather than see her go over to the enemy.

When Hayashi learned of Ito's plans, he frantically appealed to Tokio for confirmation of his own instructions and insisted that if Ito were empowered to negotiate an agreement with Russia his own pending treaty would be seriously jeopardized. He was assured that his earlier grant of plenipotentiary powers was binding upon the cabinet and that whatever Ito should do was solely upon his own initiative as a private individual.

Ito, however, acting upon his earlier understanding with Katsura, proceeded to St. Petersburg where he tried desperately to persuade the Russian government to come to terms with Japan. He found a friendly interest in St. Petersburg but an obstinate refusal to grant any further recognition of special Japanese interests in Korea. In spite of this rebuff, Ito left the Russian capital for London convinced that an understanding with Russia was possible and necessary. He flooded Tokio with telegrams urging the postponement of the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese alliance until he had exhausted all of the possibilities of a treaty with Russia. The progress of Hayashi gave the cabinet no option, however, and, with the full consent of the Emperor and the Genro, Ito's protests were overruled. Katsura now recognized that any further delay in London would intensify British suspicions already aroused by the visit to St. Petersburg.

Hayashi returned to London from his conference with Ito determined to push the negotiations to a definitive conclusion. Under his urging, Lansdowne capitulated on the question of Japanese

interests in Korea, but expressed his fear lest Britain was underwriting any jingoistic program which Japan might choose to follow in the Far East. He requested the insertion of a provision requiring a conference to decide measures which the two countries should follow when the interests of either member should be threatened. This Japan refused to grant, but assured London that there was no intention of aggressive action and that she would gladly consult Great Britain whenever it proved practicable. Although still somewhat dubious as to the wisdom of this blanket support of the Japanese policy, Lansdowne yielded, and on January 30 the treaty was signed. British isolation was at an end.

The terms of the treaty recognized the interests of the two Powers in China and the special interests of Japan in Korea. The right of intervention in those areas was admitted should the protection of those interests demand it. The casus foederis would arise in case either member were involved in a war with two or more Powers. The treaty was to last five years with an indefinite extension following the expiration of that period unless the treaty were denounced by either member. A secret diplomatic note was attached which was to insure their co-operation in the exchange of naval facilities and to guarantee that each member would maintain a fleet in Asiatic waters equal to that of any third Power.

The treaty was received in England with general cordiality. Some fears were expressed lest Great Britain had agreed to support Japanese imperialistic ambitions in Asia. Those who hoped for an agreement with Russia were convinced that this treaty had made such a step all but impossible. For the most part, however, England accepted it with relief as ending her period of isolation and giving an assurance that British interests in the Far East had found a new protection against Russian aggression. The enthusiasm for the treaty in Japan was more general. Not only did it mark a new sense of relief against the uncertain menace of Russia, but it brought the prestige of an alliance with a first class European Power.

The German and French documents reveal the concern of the Russian government as to the threat implicit in the treaty. Lamsdorff was taken off his guard and tried hurriedly to reconstruct the triple alliance of 1895 which had forced Japan to yield the Liaotung peninsula. Berlin refused to consider any such move, declaring that German interests were wholly commercial whereas the step proposed by Russia was political. The German position in the Far East was contingent upon retaining the goodwill of Britain and Japan, whereas Russia, with her land approach, could safely ignore their naval preponderance. Furthermore, Bülow argued, should Germany share in any gesture which might be interpreted as aimed

at England, Italy's loyalty to the Triple Alliance would be destroyed. Bülow publicly denied that Germany had any responsibility for the treaty, but did give it a careful approbation which represented the real attitude of German public opinion as well as that of the government. Without appreciable risk, the new alliance promised much for Germany. The threat of the collapse of Great Britain under the possible attacks of a hostile coalition was now lessened and yet the new alliance did not render German friendship less desirable for England. Furthermore, the possibility of a rapprochement between Russia, England, and France was now even more remote, thus automatically improving the relations between London and Berlin. Finally, Russia had been checked and the Open Door in the Far East assured to German merchants.

French public opinion received the news of the alliance rather calmly. There was a general recognition that the treaty was aimed at Russia, and by implication, against France as well. Although French vulnerability before this new alignment was quietly acknowledged, France readily accepted the Russian suggestion for a joint declaration to match the Anglo-Japanese treaty. Although Germany maintained her refusal to participate, France and Russia issued a statement jointly on March 20 approving the announced provisions of the alliance but reserving the right to defend their own interests in the Far East in their own fashion. This pronouncement aroused some concern in England, but French support of Russian schemes in the Far East was of value only when those schemes provoked hostilities in the West. As long as Great Britain could carry out her treaty obligations by merely "holding the ring," France would be in the happy position of defending loyally her ally without risk or effort for herself.

The United States took no more official cognizance of the treaty than the other Powers to whom it was communicated, but American officials and the general public accepted it gratefully. A sharp note to Russia from Hay, published a week after the announcement of the alliance, was welcomed by Great Britain as tantamount to American adherence. There was some professed skepticism as to the efficacy of the new treaty, and warnings were given lest the United States be tempted to commit herself to the alliance, but even these were accompanied by hopes for its future.

The alliance naturally brought attempts to rearrange the balance of power in the Far East, so definitely altered by the new treaty. Russia, supported by nothing more tangible than French good will, was forced to yield, and granted China a new convention providing for the evacuation of Russian troops from Manchuria. Hayashi had declared that the most important clause of the treaty was the recognition of the privileged position of Japan in Korea

and the Korean government so accepted it. Less than a week after the publication of the terms of the alliance, a change of ministry took place in Seoul and Japan thereupon began a successful campaign for economic concessions in the Hermit Kingdom. For China the alliance held out the hope of blocking the Russian southward thrust yet carried the threat of new spheres of influence. By 1903, however, Russia had stopped the promised evacuation of Manchuria and her policy of sabre-rattling was renewed. At last, all other efforts having failed, Japan began the war which statesmen had feared and expected for the previous six years. Did the Anglo-Japanese alliance incite Japan to attack Russia or did it simply nerve her to defend her interests, confident that Great Britain would prevent a repetition of the humiliation of 1895? Was it a temporary expedient designed to meet the immediate threat of Russian aggression or was it to prove responsible for the subsequent course of Japanese imperialism? An adequate answer lies outside the scope of this inquiry, but students of Far Eastern diplomacy have found in the alliance the initial encouragement for the expansion of Japan through Korea into Manchuria and China.

